

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR FIRST STEPS

Draft - October 2006

The technical assistance plan for the First Steps program includes two components:

- 1) Technical assistance information by topic on the website
- 2) Direct training activities scheduled regionally

The First Steps website will be revised to organize technical assistance materials by topic. Topical areas include: First Steps services, evaluation/assessment for specific eligibility determination, service delivery models, SPOE administration, service coordinator responsibilities, Web-SPOE maintenance, Quality Indicators Rating Scale (QIRS), and related topics.

Within each topical area the website will include links to guidance letters, listserve messages, technical assistance documents, Q&A, links to other websites with related information and copies of statewide presentations on the specific topic. Documents will be posted to the web as they are completed and notification will be sent to the field when new information is available. Every effort will be taken to ensure that information which crosses topics will be consistent and clearly cross-referenced. Whenever possible the information will be presented in a question and answer format and all compliance requirements will be clearly stated. Information related to effective practice will be included but differentiated from those requirements that are outlined in state and federal regulations.

As major topical areas are completed (i.e. assistive technology, evaluation/assessment for eligibility determinations, service coordinator responsibilities, etc.) Division staff will meet with the First Steps consultants to review the information and prepare direct training activities that will be conducted by the consultant in each SPOE region. This joint development of presentations should ensure consistency across SPOE regions and allow for follow-up clarification on the topics. Presentations will not be limited to SPOE/DMH staff but will also be open to providers. We recognize that providers may not be available to attend all presentations; therefore, we will make every effort to have alternative formats available for dissemination of the same information. In order to accommodate questions from the field on information presented through the website, the Division will continue use of the First Steps web reply e-mail address for submitting questions. Questions requiring clarification that would be appropriate for all users will be posted to the Q&A section for that specific topic. Questions related to situation specific implementation (an individual child/family issue) should be directed to the regional consultants for assistance.